

LATE

SENATE BILL 78, SD 1, RELATING TO EDUCATION

FEBRUARY 19, 2019 · SENATE WAYS AND MEANS
COMMITTEE · CHAIR SEN. DONOVAN DELA CRUZ

POSITION: Support.

RATIONALE: The Democratic Party of Hawai'i Education Caucus supports SB 78, SD 1, relating to education, which requires the department of education to contract with a firm that specializes in school finance to study the adequacy of education in Hawai'i.

As you are aware, the Hawai'i Supreme Court invalidated the proposed constitutional amendment to increase school funding by placing a surcharge on residential investment property. While we are disappointed by the Court's ruling, the Caucus is continuing the fight to deliver the schools our keiki deserve.

To that end, we support legislation to initiate an adequacy study of Hawai'i's public school system. Pioneered by leading school finance experts like Picus Odden and Associates, an adequacy study is an evidence-based analysis of education funding to determine what resources are needed, and in what amount, to provide every student with an equal educational opportunity.

Adequacy studies have been performed in numerous states across the nation, including Oregon, Washington, Vermont, Arkansas, and Texas. One preferred method employed in adequacy studies is the Evidence-Based Model, which reviews educational research to identify strategies

that show evidence of improving student learning, then estimates the resources needed at a prototypical school to implement those strategies and extrapolates resource costs to the district level.

According to Picus Odden and Associates, a comprehensive adequacy study for our state of our size would cost approximately \$200,000, depending upon the scope of the request. Moreover, an adequacy study could address issues of teacher recruitment and retention, including how salary and other compensation enhancements may contribute to resolving Hawai'i's teacher shortage crisis.

While the death of the constitutional amendment still stings, we cannot give up the quest for a fully-funded school system. Our children's future depends on our resolve.



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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

RE: SB 78, SD1 - RELATING TO EDUCATION

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2019

COREY ROSENLEE, PRESIDENT
HAWAII STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Chair Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii State Teachers Association **supports SB 78, SD1** relating to education.

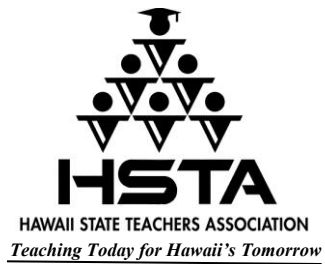
In recent years, state legislatures, state education departments and advocacy groups in more than 30 states have sponsored education adequacy studies to objectively determine the funding levels needed to educate all children to high standards. These professional studies have introduced transparency and rigor to a previously opaque and often arbitrary process.

Providing lawmakers with the very best, most accurate and most reliable data is an imperative first step to help them plan for funding allocations that will concentrate efforts to improve the quality of education our students deserve.

Supporting a school funding adequacy study using the Evidence-Based Method will determine what it will truly cost to educate all public school students in Hawai'i, regardless of income, location, learning challenges or other circumstances.

Adequacy studies are rigorously being used to lay the groundwork for long-term, meaningful school improvement by determining where resources should be allocated, based on the best educational research, that will help all students achieve and succeed, whether that means college, technical training, apprenticeships or jobs right after graduation. An adequacy study will help determine the true cost of providing a high-quality education to all of our children in Hawaii in our public schools.

An adequacy study would take into consideration what is needed at a school based on poverty, districts of varying sizes, types of schools (elementary, middle, high school), plus the size of the school, and whether it is in a geographically isolated



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district such as Lanai and Hana. It will also consider what resources, including certified teachers and support staff, are needed, to help focus on all students including those with special needs, English Language Learners, and at-risk students. The study will provide lawmakers with the foundation for any potential school funding allocations to get the most bang for the buck, so to speak. It has worked for other states, such as Washington, recently, and it is time for Hawaii to take a closer look at our funding for our public schools, especially when it comes to resource allocations.

Accordingly, the Hawaii State Teachers Association asks your committee to **support** this bill.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 02/19/2019
Time: 09:30 AM
Location: 211
Committee: Senate Ways and Means

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Dr. Christina M. Kishimoto, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 0078, SD1 RELATING TO EDUCATION.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the department of education to contract with a firm that specializes in school finance to study the adequacy of education in Hawaii. Appropriates moneys for the study. (SD1)

Department's Position:

The Department supports SB78 SD1, and has comments regarding concerns that in its current form would impose an extensive and specific scope of work for the adequacy study.

This measure would:

1. require the Department to contract with a consulting firm that specializes in school finance and studies of public education systems in multiple states, to perform a study on the adequacy of funding for education in Hawaii;
2. appropriate \$200,000 to the Department to contract the study effective July 1, 2019; and
3. establish a due date for a report on the findings and recommendation of the study no later than 20 days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2021.

The specifics on the scope of the study appear overly prescriptive and may have unintended impacts on the Department's ability to procure a quality product. As the goal of an adequacy study would be to produce an empirical methodology to estimate the cost of providing an adequate public education at the elementary and secondary level throughout Hawaii, with a sufficient degree of confidence that its findings could support public policy decision making, it is recommended that the specific requirements outlined in Section 2. (b)(1) to (5) be removed and possibly incorporated into the Committee Report as key components of the study. Alternatively, the Request for Proposal process could be used to procure the best product possible adequacy study within the available budget. The Department notes that reports of the cost of various adequacy studies conducted by Picus and Associates have been reported as being: \$349,000 for Kentucky study, \$800,000 for Arkansas, \$1.26 million for Wyoming, and approximately \$349,000 for a Washington study of limited scope.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.

The Hawaii State Department of Education seeks to advance the goals of the Strategic Plan which is focused on student success, staff success, and successful systems of support. This is achieved through targeted work around three impact strategies: school design, student voice, and teacher collaboration. Detailed information is available at www.hawaiipublicschools.org.